

REMARKS

The Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated November 24, 2004. Claims 10 and 13 to 24 are in the application, of which Claims 10, 13, 14 and 24 are the independent claims. Claims 10, 13 and 14 are being amended, Claim 24 is being added herein. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 10 and 13 to 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 5,854,882 (Wang). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of these claims are respectfully requested.

Generally, the present invention concerns image processing by a server connected to an image forming apparatus and plural client computers. More particularly, the server obtains correction data from the image forming unit and receives image data, on which the client computer performs color-matching image processing. The server performs a correction process on the image data received from the client using the correction data obtained from the image forming unit. The printing job, which is color matched by the client computer and color-corrected by the server, is output to the image forming unit.

By virtue of this arrangement, the processing of a print job can be load-balanced between a client computer, which performs color matching, and a server, which performs color correction using correction data received from an image forming apparatus.

Turning to the specific language of the claims, Claim 10 defines an image processing method which is executed by a server computer capable of being connected to an image forming unit, which has a calibration function to obtain correction data by forming and measuring a patch, and to plural client computers. The method comprises an

obtaining step of obtaining the correction data by communicating with the image forming unit, wherein the correction data is automatically obtained from the image forming unit, which executes the calibration function in the image forming unit to obtain the correction data. The server receives a color-matched printing job from a client computer, which performs color-matching image processing. In a correcting step, using the correction data obtained from the image forming unit, the server performs a correction process on image data included in the printing job received from the client computer. The service outputs the image data corrected in the correcting step to the image forming unit, in an outputting step.

The applied art, namely Wang, is not seen to teach or to suggest the above features of the claim at least as regards a server which is connected to plural client computers, which perform color-matching image processing and an image forming unit, the server: 1) communicates with the image forming unit and a client to obtain correction data from the image forming unit and a color-matched printing job from the client, 2) performs a correction process to correct image data in the print job based on the obtained correction data, and 3) outputs the corrected image data to the image forming unit.

Wang is seen to describe providing an overlap corrected halftone image based on halftone correction information. (See Abstract, Wang) Commencing at col. 8, line 30, Wang is seen to describe providing test patterns to a printer, which outputs the test patterns. The printed test patterns are evaluated to obtain the halftone calibration information, which is used to produce a dot overlap corrected image. Referring to Figure 9 and the description commencing at col. 12, line 55, Wang is seen to describe a system consisting of a printer and a scanner connected to a computer. The computer sends the test patterns to the printer, which produces the output which is evaluated, and the results are

stored in a look-up table in the computer.

However, Wang, and in particular the cited portions thereof, are not seen to show a server which is connected to plural client computers, which perform color-matching image processing and an image forming unit, the server: 1) communicates with an image forming unit and a client to obtain correction data from the image forming unit and a color-matched printing job from the client, 2) performs a correction process to correct image data in the print job based on the obtained correction data, and 3) outputs the corrected image data to the image forming unit.

Therefore, for at least the foregoing reasons, Claim 10 is believed to be in condition for allowance. Further, Applicants submit that Claims 13 and 14 are believed to be in condition for allowance for at least the same reasons.

New Claim 24 is directed to an image processing method executed in a server computer, which is capable of being connected to an image forming unit and plural client computers. The image forming unit having a calibration function to obtain correction data by forming and measuring a patch. According to the method executed in the server computer, the correction data is automatically obtained from the image forming unit by communicating with the image forming unit, wherein the calibration function is executed in the image forming unit to obtain the correction data. In a receiving step, the server computer receives a printing job from the client computer. Color matching and color correction processes are performed on image data of a printing job, in a correcting step of the method executed in the server computer. The color matching process is performed on image data included in the printing job received from the client computer using conversion data used in color matching for the image forming unit. The correction process performs

color correction using the correction data obtained from the image forming unit. The corrected image data is output to the image forming unit.

Claim 24 is believed to be patentable over Wang, since Wang is not seen to describe at least the features of a server performing color matching and color correction processes on image data of a printing job, in a correcting step of the method executed in the server computer, where the color matching process is performed on image data included in the printing job received from the client computer using conversion data used in color matching for the image forming unit, and the correction process performs color correction using the correction data obtained from the image forming unit.

The other claims are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa,
California, office by telephone at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should be directed
to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carole A. Quinn", is written over a horizontal line.

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